



**ASSOCIATION OF APPLIED BIOLOGISTS**

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# **Production and Protection of Sugar Beet and Potatoes**




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Cambridge**



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## INTRODUCTION

The last conference on this topic was in 1998 and the situation then was very different. The introduction to this conference looked forward to many innovations including targeted inputs and biotechnology. In 2005 sugar beet, in particular, faces a time when great change is coming to the industry. As the EU sugar regime reforms unfold future prospects for the crop in parts of Europe remain rather uncertain and the conference opens with a view of the future from the industry perspective.

Management of the sugar beet and potato crops requires a good knowledge of the prevalent pest and disease problems and methods for their control. In sugar beet the increase in the disease rhizomania has resulted in the development of many new resistant varieties that require careful evaluation before they can be recommended to growers. Breeding for resistance is important for potatoes too with new sources of PCN resistance being developed. Biotechnology has an important role to play in the development for both sugar beet and potato varieties. Aphids, viruses, nutrition and drought remain important study areas in both crops. Information technology has developed and together with technology transfer and modelling, aims to predict future disease levels to enable optimisation of inputs. In both of these crops, as in all of agriculture in the current climate, effects on the environment both direct and indirect need to be considered as biodiversity matters have become of public concern.

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